

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

me, dearest father, to lose oneself utterly, and to think nothing of self; even as did the glorious labourers, who, with such great love and desire, offered up the life of their body and watered his garden with blood, with humble and continual prayers, and yet enduring even unto death. Look to it that I do not see you shamed, so that your own shadow frighten you, but a virile warrior; and never depart from that yoke of obedience that the Sovereign Pontiff has laid upon you; and, also, in the order carry out what you see to be the honour of God; for the great goodness of God demands this of us, and He has set us there for nought else. Consider how great is the need that we see in Holy Church; for we see her utterly left alone. And thus the Truth made manifest, I write to you in the other letter; and even as the Spouse is left alone, so is her bridegroom left alone. O sweetest father, I will not conceal the great mysteries of God from you; but I will recount them as briefly as can be, according as the weak tongue may narrate. And, also, I will tell you what I would have you do. But receive what I tell you without pain; for I know not what the Divine Goodness will do with me, whether He will make me smarmy or summon me to Himself.

" Father, father and sweetest son, wonderful mysteries has God wrought from the day of the Circumcision until now; so much that the tongue would not be sufficient to be able to narrate them. But let us let all that time go, and come to the Sunday of Sexagesima, on which day there were, as in brief I am writing you in the other letter, those mysteries which you shall hear; for: seemed to me that never had I borne the like. For so great was the pain in my heart, that my habit was rent, as much of it as I could grasp, as I went round the chapel like a person in agony. Whoso had restrained me, would have verily taken my life. When the evening of Monday came, I was constrained to retire to Christ on earth and to three cardinals; I had myself helped, and went into the study; and when I had written to Christ on earth, I could write no more; so great were the pains that increased in my body. And, after a little while, the terror of the lemons began, in such wise that they made me utterly stupefied,